



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**EVENT: Guilty Plea**

**Defendant: James Edgar Coleman**

**MAN PLEADS GUILTY IN HEROIN - FENTANYL DEATHS**

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James Edgar Coleman, 36, of Detroit, pleaded guilty today in federal court to a superseding information charging him with two counts of delivering a controlled substance resulting in death, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Robert Corso , Special Agent in Charge of the DEA, Detroit, as well as Oakland County Sheriff Michael J. Bouchard.

Coleman entered the guilty plea before Senior United States District Judge Lawrence P. Zatkoff, in U.S. District Court in Detroit. Coleman admitted to the Court that he had sold heroin mixed with fentanyl from a home on Keating St. in the city of Detroit. Coleman stated that the controlled substance that he sold had been acquired by two individuals, who ingested the drug and died as a result. The victims named in the plea agreement were Lauren Jolly, 17 of Bloomfield Twp., and Daniel McElmurry, of Madison Heights. Coleman's guilty plea is the first to specifically address the spate of deaths from overdoses of heroin laced with fentanyl, which occurred earlier this year in Detroit and other urban areas throughout the United States.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, “All illegal drugs are dangerous. In this case the danger was so great it caused the immediate deaths of two people in our community. This conviction is the result of a robust federal response to the rash of overdose deaths caused by fentanyl-laced heroin, and would not have been successful without the excellent investigative work by the DEA and the Oakland County Narcotics Enforcement Team.”

SAC Corso said, “Today’s guilty plea by Mr. Coleman is indicative of the commitment law enforcement, on all levels, has made to target individuals involved in the distribution of this deadly mixture of heroin and fentanyl. The message everyone should take from these tragic overdose deaths is that drug use can and will kill you, and that you are risking your life by consuming them. No one should forget the sorrow that the families of these victims must go through, as a result of these overdose deaths, for the rest of their lives.”

Sheriff Bouchard said, “The cooperative effort of the Oakland County Sheriff’s Narcotic’s Enforcement Team, the Drug Enforcement Agency, and the U.S. Attorney’s Office stands strong in our endeavors to stop future occurrences that result in death from the distribution of this lethal mixture of heroin and fentanyl. It is our promise to the citizens of Oakland County to do our part to prevent incidents such as the tragic deaths of Lauren Jolly and Daniel McElmurry, by investigating each case with every resource available. We are determined to stop distribution in its tracks by placing the dealers behind bars, and by convicting dangerous criminals like Coleman before they cause anymore harm to the citizens of our communities. “

Coleman faces a charge that carries a mandatory minimum sentence of twenty years imprisonment and a maximum of life imprisonment. Under the sentencing guidelines provided for in the plea agreement, if accepted by the Court, the defendant faces a range of 292 -365 months imprisonment. He has been in federal custody since June 2006.

The investigation of this case has been conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Oakland County Narcotics Enforcement Team, and by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kathryn McCarthy.